

A [prefix](#) is a letter or a group of letters attached to the beginning of a word that partly indicates its meaning. For example, the word *prefix* itself begins with a prefix--*pre-*, which generally means "before."

Understanding the meanings of the common prefixes can help us deduce the meanings of new words that we encounter. But be careful: some prefixes (such as *in-*) have more than one meaning (in this example, "not" and "into").

The table below defines and illustrates 35 common prefixes.

Common Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Example
<i>a-, an-</i>	without	amoral
<i>ante-</i>	before	antecedent
<i>anti-</i>	against	anticlimax
<i>auto-</i>	self	autopilot
<i>circum-</i>	around	circumvent
<i>co-</i>	with	copilot
<i>com-, con-</i>	with	companion, contact
<i>contra-</i>	against	contradict
<i>de-</i>	off, away from	devalue
<i>dis-</i>	not	disappear
<i>en-</i>	put into	enclose
<i>ex-</i>	out of, former	extract, ex-president
<i>extra-</i>	beyond, more than	extracurricular
<i>hetero-</i>	different	heterosexual
<i>homo-</i>	same	homonym
<i>hyper-</i>	over, more	hyperactive
<i>il-, im-, in-, ir-</i>	not, without	illegal, immoral, inconsiderate, irresponsible
<i>in-</i>	into	insert
<i>inter-</i>	between	intersect
<i>intra-</i>	between	intravenous
<i>macro-</i>	large	macroeconomics
<i>micro-</i>	small	microscope
<i>mono-</i>	one	monocle
<i>non-</i>	not, without	nonentity
<i>omni-</i>	all, every	omniscient
<i>post-</i>	after	postmortem
<i>pre-, pro-</i>	before, forward	precede, project
<i>sub-</i>	under	submarine
<i>syn-</i>	same time	synchronize
<i>trans-</i>	across	transmit
<i>tri-</i>	three	tricycle
<i>un-</i>	not	unfinished
<i>uni-</i>	one	unicorn